



Working Programme 2003-2006

This Working Programme completes or replaces the Working programme 1999-2002 (12 October 1999).

General focus

The main focus of ISCAR will be **integrative regional studies covering the whole of the Alps**. The elaboration of an Alp Atlas, Cultural Diversity or Human Impacts are potential topics. Such topics should be promoted as far as they enable the development of new methodologies, help to detect future problems or research gaps or lead to new research questions.

Nevertheless, **co-operations with other mountain ranges** (e.g. UNEP: Carpathes) and with global projects or programmes (e.g. MRI) should be established, if scientific interests or know-how transfer look promising.

Research activities related to the **Alpine Convention (AC)** have to be discussed in detail, as far as the Alpine Convention expresses concrete research needs (e.g. related to protocols such as 'Population and Culture' or 'Indicators of Environmental Quality'). Following some suggestions for a co-operation between AC and ISCAR recently made by German representatives of AC, ISCAR will be open to take in charge specific studies in commission of AC.

Organisation of alpine research, ISCAR-Partners

To continue work on an alp-wide level, ISCAR needs support from all partners. Since, at the moment, France and Slovenia are not in charge of a well founded national institution for alpine research, one of the main objectives in this period is to animate and support the building up of such institutions in these countries. In France, the Mountain Institute in Chambéry could be appropriate while in Slovenia scientists have to express such intentions.

Another aim concerns the association of research institutions from the Principalities of Liechtenstein and Monaco to ISCAR.

Alpine Convention (AC)

ISCAR activities related to AC could be a permanent scientific controlling process to evaluate the implementation of the objectives of the different protocols of the Alpine Convention. Furthermore science-based expertises for the Boards of AC could be elaborated in commission of AC. As far as the Permanent Secretary of AC will be established in 2003, perspectives for co-operation have to be discussed with the Head of the Permanent Secretary.

ForumAlpinum

To come to an end with the "rotation" of the ForumAlpinum through all alpine countries, the next Forum will take place in Slovenia in 2004, hosted by the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and organised by the National Institute of Biology (Dr. Anton Brancelj).

The continuation of ForumAlpinum after 2004 has to be the topic of a fundamental debate, which should end at the ForumAlpinum 2004, so that decisions can be taken there. Perhaps ForumAlpinum will be linked closer with the Alpine Convention, with science or NGOs, may be it will be extended to a European or Global MountainForum – first discussions on a network of Mountain Research in Europe had been lead at the ForumAlpinum in Alpbach – or it will be stopped.

Projects

Some activities begun in the first planning period will be carried on, as **AlpAtlas** and **CODALP** (Common Database on research projects). Based on CODALP, information on current research projects focused on the Alps will be actualised and published (if possible on the Web).

The RAUMALP project, which until now only financed projects dedicated to the Austrian part of the Alps, shall be internationalised. The objective is to create data bases and instruments for a continuous observation and information system for the Alpine region. Methodologically organised as a bottom-up process RAUMALP will carefully look for gateway to SOIA in order to allow a fruitful co-operation.

Further, ISCAR plans to build up or continue partnerships for projects dealing with all aspects of diversity in the Alps (cultural diversity, biodiversity, geodiversity), seen from an alp-wide perspective. In this context, ISCAR will continue the co-operation within the WWF Alpine Programme "Biodiversity Vision for the Alps".

Promotion/Public Relations/Networking

Promotion of alpine research as well as of ISCAR have to be improved and intensified in this coming period. Therefore, ISCAR has

- to initiate presentations on alpine / mountain research in Europe (e.g. at conferences);
- to look for a better presentation and positioning of ISCAR with the help of a flyer, posters or a homepage (all still have to be created) to inform at manifestations;
- to clarify the relationship between ISCAR and the existing national boards for alpine research (e.g. by common logos or acronyms)

Furthermore, ISCAR will continue existing and establish new partnerships.

Committee and Office

In the actual Committee (2002), natural sciences are not represented sufficiently. As soon as members have to be replaced, the partners should pay attention to this.

Compared with planned actions, the capacity of ISCAR-Office (20% office manager, 20% secretary) is quite limited in time. ISCAR should look for further financial support – at all from EU Programmes – to improve the promotion of ISCAR activities by the office or by members engaged.